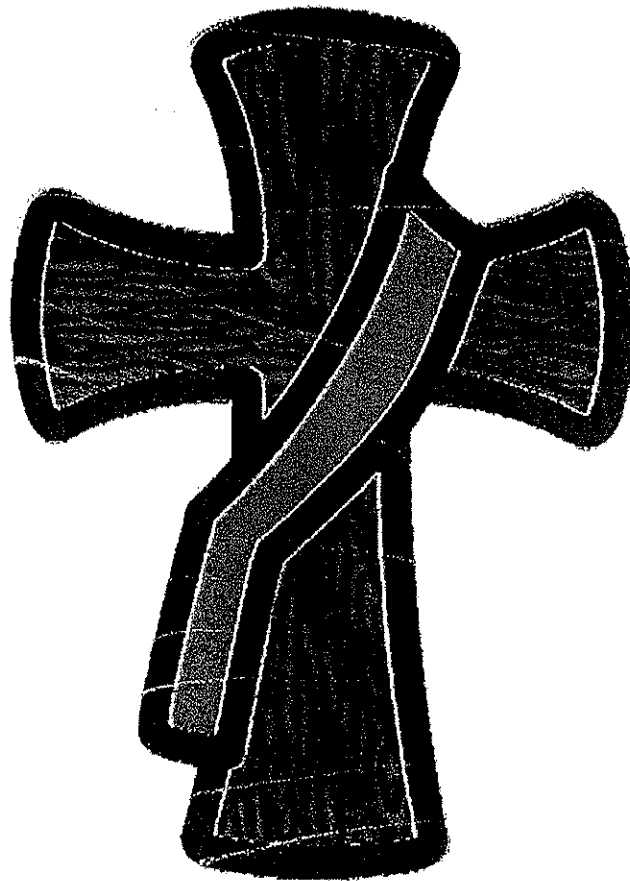
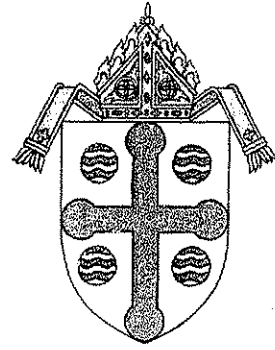
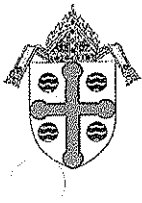


*Diocese of Springfield  
Massachusetts*



*The Official Handbook  
of the  
Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Springfield*



OFFICE OF THE DIACONATE  
DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD



*"Out of love, place yourselves at one another's service"*  
(Gal. 5:13)

August 22, 2013

My Brothers in Christ,

As we move through the years and our ministries, we change and try to adapt to all obstacles placed in our way. Following in Christ's footsteps is never easy but we accepted that challenge upon Ordination and it runs through our veins each and every day spurring us on to be better Christians and spread the Word of God to all those we come in contact with.

With these changes and obstacles comes the need to update our procedures and stipulations as a Diaconate Family in the Diocese of Springfield. I have attached a list of the changes that have been made to *The Official Handbook of the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Springfield*. All changes have been reviewed canonically and judicially by the diocesan Office of the Bishop and have been accepted by the Deacon Council.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 413.452.0676.

As always, thank you for all you do and continue to do for our Diocese! May God's blessings always be bestowed upon you and your family.

Peace,

Deacon Leo Coughlin, Jr.  
Director of Deacons

**\*Please note:** This revised handbook replaces all older versions. Please discard any other versions that you may have.

## REVISED HANDBOOK CHANGES: 05/2013

1. Updated Letter of Promulgation from Bishop Timothy McDonnell
2. Page 11: Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest – leaving the priest's chair vacant....
3. Page 16: Clerical Attire – the additional policy regarding albs and stoles was added.
4. Appendix-page 2: The timeframe requirements for the CORI process and Safe Environment Training was added.
5. Appendix-page 10: Communion Section-the Purification of Sacred Vessels by the Deacon at Mass is clarified.

## REVISED HANDBOOK CHANGES: 03/2013

1. Page 5: Concerns for Newly Ordained.
2. Page 11: Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest – leaving the priest’s chair vacant....
3. Page 13: Meeting of the Formation Board – changing meeting times and locations of two Diaconate Formation Board meetings to accommodate men in Formation.
4. Page 14: Deacon Council – we highlighted the Deacon Council Board paragraph.
5. Page 16: Clerical Attire – we added that all newly ordained deacons will receive a Diaconate Cross from the Deacon Council.
6. Appendix: A 2012-2013 Code of Conduct replaced the older version.
7. Appendix-page 9: Updated wording to conform to the New Roman Missal and added the step of bringing the Gospel Book to the Bishop so he can reverence it.
8. Appendix-page 10: Concluding Rite – Updated wording to conform to the New Roman Missal.
9. Appendix-page 10: Note to Deacons – Added number 3.
10. Appendix-page 11-16: Inserted an updated Diaconal Service Agreement.
11. Appendix-page 17: Retiring from Active Service in the Diaconate page added to clarify proper procedures for submitting retirement letters.
12. Appendix-page 19: Continuing Formation for Newly Ordained (3 year program) page added.
13. Appendix-page 20-22: Inserted Deacon Preferences for Wakes and Funerals.
14. Appendix-page 23: Inserted informational page about the Sunshine Club.

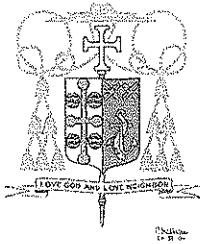
\*During the printing process, when the files were transferred, the footer was partially cut off in several places. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and we will rectify the situation during the next revision.

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Diocese of Springfield  
Office of the Bishop

July 17, 2013

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Thank you for all your service to God and His people!

In paragraph 41 of the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, the following is found:

*"The Deacon exercises his ministry within a specific pastoral context – the communion and mission of a diocesan church. He is in direct relationship with the diocesan bishop with whom he is in communion and under whose authority he exercises his ministry. In making his promise of respect and obedience to his bishop, the deacon takes as his model Christ, who became the servant of his Father. The diocesan bishop also enters into a relationship with the deacons, since the deacon is his collaborator in the service of God's people. It is, therefore, a particular responsibility of the bishop to provide for the pastoral care of the deacons of his diocese."*

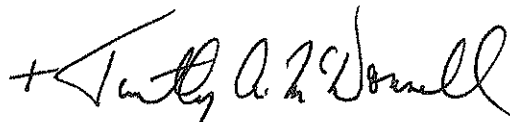
The Deacon Handbook of the Diocese of Springfield will be, I trust, a real help to you and to me in fulfilling some of our mutual responsibilities. It sets forth a history of the diaconate here in our diocese indicating some of the services that permanent deacons have performed over the years, and then lays down guidelines and regulations for the ministry of the permanent deacon within the diocese. I pray you find it of help and assistance in the wonderful work you do for God's people here in Western Massachusetts.

I formally promulgated the *Official Handbook of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Springfield*, effective October 4, 2007, on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, a permanent deacon whose ministry is effective to this day, and I have now approved this amended version as of June 1, 2013.

Know you are in my prayers; I hope I may be in yours.

With every best wish,

In Christ,



Most Reverend Timothy A. McDonnell  
Bishop of Springfield



## FOREWORD

*On September 9, 2006, a Handbook Committee was formed in response to a request from the Diocesan Permanent Diaconate Board to draft a Handbook for Permanent Deacons of the Diocese of Springfield outlining certain norms, policies, rights, obligations and responsibilities for permanent deacons serving in the Diocese of Springfield. This committee was comprised of four deacons who worked in close collaboration with the Assistant Director of the Permanent Diaconate Program.*

*The committee reviewed the handbooks from the Archdiocese of Hartford and the Diocese of Providence and decided to use the handbook from the Diocese of Providence as a model and guide for the writing of this document. The committee consulted the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States developed by the Bishops' Committee on the Diaconate of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and solicited ideas and suggestions for the handbook from several deacons throughout the diocese.*

*The Committee, which consisted of Deacon Bernard Fleury, Deacon Thomas Callahan, Deacon Sean Mulholland and Deacon Art Ratte, met four times to review, compose and organize the material to create a working document. On April 22, 2007, the Handbook Committee completed a Draft Handbook for Permanent Deacons of the Diocese of Springfield and formally presented it to the Deacon Council for review, discussion and revision.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dear Brothers in Christ:

The Deacon Council wishes to acknowledge our brother deacons, Thomas Callahan, Bernard Fleury, Sean Mulholland and Art Ratté for their presentation to the Board of this handbook. Their effort is truly appreciated by the diaconal family.

This handbook was gratefully accepted and with additional input from Board members, we are now able to introduce our first Deacon Handbook for the Diocese of Springfield. Our intent is to be able to add to this handbook in the future as we grow as a diaconal body.

The Board especially wants to thank Bishop Timothy McDonnell and Msgr. John Bonzagni for their support of the Diaconate family.

I would like to personally thank the members of the Deacon Council and Fr. Savage for all of their assistance throughout this process.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leo", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Deacon Leo Coughlin  
Director of Deacons

***PRAYER  
TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY***

MARY,

Who as teacher of faith, by your obedience to the word of God, has cooperated in a remarkable way with the work of redemption, make the ministry of deacons effective by teaching them to hear the Word and to proclaim it faithfully.

MARY,

Teacher of charity, who by your total openness to God's call, has cooperated in bringing to birth all the Church's faithful, make the ministry and the life of deacons fruitful by teaching them to give themselves totally to the service of the People of God.

MARY,

Teacher of prayer, who through your maternal intercession has supported and helped the Church from her beginnings, make deacons always attentive to the needs of the faithful by teaching them to come to know the value of prayer.

MARY,

Teacher of humility, by constantly knowing yourself to be the servant of the Lord you were filled with the Holy Spirit, make deacons docile instruments in Christ's work of redemption by teaching them the greatness of being the least of all.

MARY,

Teacher of that service which is hidden, who by your everyday and ordinary life filled with love, knew how to cooperate with the salvific plan of God in an exemplary fashion, make deacons good and faithful servants, by teaching them the joy of serving the Church with an ardent love.

Amen



## I. HISTORY OF THE DIACONATE

### Prologue

Deacons in the twenty-first century in order to fulfill the ministry to which we were ordained, need to have a basic understanding of the origins of our order, its development and its decline as well as its restoration in the Western, Latin Rite Catholic Church.

James M. Barnett, whose Doctoral Dissertation The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order was used as the textbook on The Diaconate for the first class of permanent deacons in the Springfield Diocese, writes: “The more I studied the diaconate the more fascinated I became with the order and the more I came to believe in its importance to the renewal of the whole life and ministry of the church. . . . For me the diaconate has become the most exciting order within a splendid ministry when it is viewed in the context of the whole, and seen as it can and should be — the order which informs all orders of the primary work we are all sent to do, though in different ways, with varying functions.”

### Origins of the Diaconate

The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, established the sacramental and communal Church in the breaking and sharing of bread and drinking from the cup of salvation. In the first generation of the Church, the Spirit led the Apostles to select seven men as their assistants who would soon be called deacons. A complaint had been made by the “Hellenists,” who spoke only Greek. They claimed that “their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. So the twelve called together the community of the disciples and said ‘It is not right for us to neglect the Word of God to serve at table. Brothers select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task, whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and to the Ministry of the Word.’ The proposal was acceptable to the whole community so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit, also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenac and Nicholas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them.” (Acts 6:1-6)



“The essential function of the twelve is the ‘service of the word,’ including development of the kerygma by formulation of the teachings of Jesus.” (Commentary, The New American Bible, 1991,6, 2-4, p. 1177) Some commentators assert that “to serve at the table” described an administrative function, the keeping of accounts that recorded the distribution of food to needy members because there is no further mention of them doing

this task. Instead Chapter 6: 8-15, and all of Chapter 7 of Acts details Stephen as a preacher and his martyrdom. Chapter 8: 4-13 and 26-40 describe the deacon Philip preaching to Simon the Magician and the Ethiopian Eunuch. But “even though the seven were thought to have been deacons and were used as models for the diaconate from the time of Iranaeus, preaching was not part of the deacon’s function as the office developed in the Church of the sub-apostolic age, so far as is known and it did not become so in the early Church.” 2

As of early in the second century, although New Testament texts mention the two offices of Bishop and Deacon together, in the light of later development, an order of precedence can be clearly seen. Deacons were the Bishop’s assistants primarily in terms of the “dispensers of the Church’s Charities; they ‘served’ the poor and the sick.” (p. 37)

### Development of the Diaconate

The images of who a deacon was and his roles were often entwined and indicate that the Church’s needs and concepts of ordained ministry especially for the diaconate were the determining factors in what these roles were. In the second century, deacons were seen to symbolize Jesus Christ (Ignatius), be the servant of the Church (Ignatius and Polycarp), function liturgically at the Eucharist by administering the Body and Blood to those present and to take the Sacred Elements to those who were absent.

In the third century, deacons also became the “eye” of the bishop in all matters, kept order in Christian meetings, reported the sick to the congregation to be visited and helped, baptized, instructed the people at weekday “prayer meetings,” set up the gifts for Eucharist, began to administer the chalice only in some places, became doorkeeper, and functioned as full time paid servants of the Church.

In the fourth century deacons on occasion headed small, rural congregations and, on occasion in the absence of a bishop, presided at the Eucharist. That was forbidden at the Council of Arles. He also read the Gospel at the Eucharist, did what we now call the intercessions, announced the kiss of peace and blessed the paschal candle. (p. 12 1-22)

### Decline of the Diaconate

A number of changes which began in the fourth century eventually lead to the decline of the Diaconate as a permanent order at least in the Roman Church. The presbyter becomes a mini-bishop in the local congregation while the bishop assumes the oversight of a number of Churches that we now call a diocese, and only the bishop ordains presbyters and deacons. By Nicea in 325 A.D. bishops are already meeting with other bishops as a corporate body in synods and councils. Nicea developed regulations for these meetings. By the end of the fourth century there is an increase in the list of “minor orders” from “lower” to “higher”: doorkeepers, exorcists, singers, readers and sub-deacons. The decline of the Diaconate according to Barnett “springs from the idea of *cursus honorum* more than from any other single factor. Men at first “should” and later “must” pass through a succession of “grades for religious service” (Cyprian) that becomes true for all the orders including deacon, presbyter and bishop. (105-106)

However, it was the development of the requirement for celibacy of bishops, priests and deacons in the West that along with the *cursus honorum* led to the final demise of the Diaconate as a permanent order. The First and Second Lateran Councils of 1123 and 1139 declared clerical marriage invalid instead of only illicit. With the combination of a required *cursus honorum* and hierarchical structure in which the “higher” order contained within itself the “lower” plus required celibacy, why should a man not aspire to the “higher” order of priesthood rather than the “lower” order of deacon?

### Restoration of the Diaconate

The restoration of the Diaconate as distinctive and permanent order was begun by the Second Vatican Council in its Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*). Married men may be ordained permanent deacons. There is no reference to the Diaconate as an inferior order. “The Diaconate is not an abridged or substitute form of the Priesthood, but is a full order in its own right.” (p. 28, Par. 50) Pope Paul VI restored the Permanent Diaconate for the Church in the West on June 18, 1967, in his decree “*Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*.” He left it to each national conference of bishops to determine the time and conditions for the restoration.

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in April 1968, prepared a position paper and established an ad hoc committee to prepare its petition to Rome for the restoration of the Permanent Diaconate in the United States. In August of 1968, Rome gave its formal approval and, in November of that year, the Bishops Committee on the Permanent Diaconate began its work. In August of 1971, that committee issued guidelines for a program of training for a lifetime ministry as ordained, permanent deacons.

The present Springfield Diocesan Program is the fruit of much exploration and study. At the request of Bishop Christopher J. Weldon, the fourth Bishop of Springfield, Monsignor Paul D. Riedl, a former rector of the North American College at the University of Louvain in Belgium, organized a study committee. Because of the interest in the program on the part of the diocesan Priests’ Senate, Monsignor Riedl arranged for a day-long presentation on the permanent diaconate to all priests of the Diocese who had assembled at Mont Marie in Holyoke. The principal speaker was Monsignor Ernest J. Fiedler, executive director of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on the Permanent Diaconate. Monsignor Thomas F. Devine, a former president of Our Lady of the Elms College in Chicopee, succeeded Monsignor Riedl as head of the diocesan program and several prospective applicants joined a formation program begun by the Archdiocese of Hartford.

In October of 1978, Bishop Joseph F. Maguire, the fifth Bishop of Springfield, named Father Leo A. Leclerc, then Diocesan Director of Campus Ministries, to be Diocesan Director of a Permanent Diaconate Program. Father Leclerc organized a planning board of priests and sisters that, in an eight-month period and in consultation with diocesan groups, produced a program that won the prerequisite approval of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on the Permanent Diaconate. After recommendations made by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee had been incorporated into the diocesan plan,

Bishop Maguire approved it on December 19, 1979.

The first class in the three-year program of spiritual and academic formation of deacons for the Diocese of Springfield began in February, 1980 and nineteen men were ordained as permanent deacons on January 15, 1983. Nine men began a second class in the spiritual and academic formation of deacons in February, 1982 and they were ordained as permanent deacons on December 8, 1984. Eleven men began a third class with a four year program in 1987 and were ordained in 1991.

In May, 1993, seven men were ordained as permanent deacons, followed by five men in 1997, nine men in 2001, and thirteen men in 2005. As of January 1, 2007 there are fifty-three active and five retired deacons in the Springfield Diocese. A new class will begin formation in September 2007, and a class of six candidates is scheduled to be ordained in December of 2007. A second class already in formation is scheduled to be ordained in May of 2009. At the request of Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell, new classes will be started every two years beginning in the fall of 2007. Thereafter, new classes will begin every other year.

#### Documents on the Restored Diaconate

In 1998, the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy published the "*Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons*" and "*The Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons.*" These documents included a call for local conferences of bishops to draw up their own national directories based on the Roman Directory. At

its June meeting of 2003, the full body of United States Catholic Bishops approved the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*. "After receiving the subsequent recognition of the Holy See on October 30, 2004 it was promulgated by Decree effective December 26, 2004, the Feast of Saint Stephen, Deacon and Martyr. This *HANDBOOK FOR DEACONS* recognizes the authority and import of these documents, and has been prepared as a step toward a more complete and accurate understanding of the deacon and the diaconate in this particular church. This handbook seeks to be a ready reference for the Deacons in the Diocese of Springfield but it does not seek to replace either the Roman documents or the American documents on the diaconate.



*Reference: History of the Diaconate:*

*James M. Barnett, The Diaconate. (New York: The Seabury Press, 1981), pp xiii-xiv*

## II. MINISTRY AND LIFE OF DEACONS

### Relationship with the Diocesan Bishop

#### Appointment to Ministry:

The deacon is the bishop's collaborator in the service of God's people and exercises his ministry under the bishop's authority. The bishop appoints the deacon to a specific assignment by means of an official letter of appointment. The principal criteria for the assignment are the pastoral needs of the local church and the personal qualifications of the deacon. The assignment should take into consideration the deacon's family and occupational responsibilities.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, nn. 41-42)*

#### Concerns for Newly Ordained:

Newly ordained deacons will be appointed by the bishop and supervised by a priest. The pastoral care of a newly ordained deacon and his formation, coordinated by the Director of Deacons, **extends for the first three years after ordination.** See appendix for details.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 46)*

#### Continuing Formation and Education:

With the approval of the bishop, a realistic program for the continuing education and formation of each deacon and the entire deacon assembly should be designed. The preparation, implementation and evaluation of this program are to be coordinated by the Director of Deacons.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 47)*

### Relationship with the Diocese

#### Diocesan Appointments:

Deacons who possess the necessary requirements, experience and talent may be appointed members of the diocesan pastoral council, finance council or commissions.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 49)*

Deacons who have parochial administrative training and experience may be entrusted, under a canonically appointed pastor or priest-supervisor, to assist in the pastoral care of a parish or to temporarily guide a parish that lacks, because of a shortage, the immediate benefit of a resident pastor (DMLPD, nos. 40-42).

In these extraordinary situations, deacons "always have precedence over the non-ordained faithful," and their authority and responsibility "should always be clearly specified in writing when they are assigned office" (DMLPD, no. 41).

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 49)*



## **Relationship with the Priesthood**

Deacons exercise their ministry in communion not only with their bishop but also with the priests who serve the local church.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 50)*

### **The Appointment of Deacons to Assist in the Pastoral Care of a Parish:**

*If the diocesan bishop should decide that due to a dearth of priests a participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish is to be entrusted to a deacon or to some other person who is not a priest or to a community of persons, he is to appoint some priest endowed with the powers and faculties of a pastor to supervise the pastoral care.*

*(CC 517, §2)*

The diocesan bishop may assign a deacon to assist a priest entrusted with the pastoral care of one or several parishes (CIC, no. 517:2; DMLPD, no. 41). Deacons who possess administrative experience and have received pastoral theological training also may be called to guide Christian communities that do not have the immediate benefit of a resident priest (DMLPD, no. 41).

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 51)*

## **Relationship among Deacons and those in Formation**

By virtue of their ordination, a sacramental fraternity unites deacons. They form a community that witnesses to Christ, the Deacon-Servant. Each deacon should have a sense of being joined with his fellow deacons in a bond of charity, prayer, obedience to their bishops, ministerial zeal and collaboration. The deacon community should support those in the aspirant and candidate paths in formation.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 54)*

## **Relationship with Men and Women Religious**

Deacons ought to promote collaboration between themselves and women and men religious who also have dedicated their lives to the service of the Church. Pastoral sensitivity between deacons and religious should be carefully nurtured.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 55)*

## **Relationship with the Laity**

The laity, as members of the Church, has an obligation and right to share in the communion and mission of the Church.... Set aside for service, the deacon links together the individual and diverse segments of the community of believers.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 57)*

## **Relationship with Society**

The diaconate is lived in a particular way in the manner in which a deacon fulfills his obligations to his secular occupation, to his civic and public responsibilities and among his family and neighbors. This, in turn, enables the deacon to bring back to the Church an appreciation of the meaning and value of the Gospel as he discerns it in the lives and questions of the people he has encountered.... The deacon is ordained precisely for service in both the sanctuary and the marketplace.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, nn. 58-59)*

## **Diaconal Spirituality**

### **Spiritual Life**

Deacons are obliged to give priority to the spiritual life and to live their *diakonia* with generosity. They should integrate their family obligations, professional life and ministerial responsibilities so as to grow in their commitment to the person and mission of Christ, the Servant.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 63)*

### **Simplicity of Life**

Deacons are charged at ordination to shape a way of life always according to the example of Christ and to imitate Christ who came not to be served but to serve. Therefore, deacons are called to a simple lifestyle.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 64)*

### **Spiritual Direction**

Every deacon is encouraged to meet regularly with a qualified spiritual director.

## **The Deacon in his State of Life**

### **The Married Deacon**

A married deacon, with his wife and family, gives witness to the sanctity of marriage. The more they grow in mutual love, conforming their lives to the Church's teaching on marriage and about sexuality, the more they give to the Christian community a model of Christ-like love, compassion and self-sacrifice... (A deacon and his wife both as a spiritual man and woman and as a couple), have much to share with the bishop and his priests about the Sacrament of Matrimony.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 68)*

The wife and family of a deacon are invaluable resources of support and guidance in many ways. They may be called upon to handle more of the daily duties and responsibilities of the household that the deacon may find himself unable to tend to. It may also be necessary for the deacon's wife and family to limit the many requests made on his time and to help him to keep his priorities in balance: Family, Profession, Diaconate.

### **The Celibate Deacon**

If the celibate deacon gives up one kind of family, he gains another. In Christ, the people he serves become mother, brother and sister. In this way, celibacy as a sign and motive of pastoral charity takes flesh. Reciprocity, mutuality and affection shared with many become channels that mold and shape the celibate deacon's pastoral love and his sexuality. (*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 71*).

The celibate deacon needs to find support from his family, members of the church and the deacon community as he serves the needs of the people.

In one way or another, celibacy affects every deacon, married or unmarried.

Understanding the nature of celibacy - its value and its practice - are essential to the married deacons. Not only does this understanding strengthen and nurture his own commitment to marital chastity, but it also helps to prepare him for the possibility of living celibate chastity should his wife predecease him.

(*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 72*)

### **A Deacon and Family Confronting Divorce**

Divorce between a deacon and his wife can happen. In this situation, suitable pastoral care should be offered to the deacon, his wife and their children. This pastoral care, which may be facilitated by the Director of Deacons or any other qualified person on behalf of the bishop, should include ample time to work through the various stages of grieving and adjustment caused by divorce. The determination of the divorced deacon's ministerial status will require sensitivity and prudence on the part of the bishop, the pastor or pastoral supervisor, the ministerial community and other institutions in which the deacon serves. Members of the diaconal community are also in a unique position to reach out, as appropriate, in order to help the divorced couple and family deal with the challenges the divorce may entail.

(*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 76*)

## The Permanency of the Order of Deacons

### Permanency and Stability

Underlying the restoration and renewal of the Diaconate at the Second Vatican Council was the principle that the Diaconate is a stable and permanent rank of ordained ministry. Since the history of the order over the last millennium, however, has been centered on the Diaconate as a transitory stage leading to the Priesthood, actions that may obfuscate the stability and permanence of the order should be minimized. This would include the ordination of celibate or widowed deacons to the Priesthood.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 77)*

## The Obligations and Rights of Deacons

### Incardination

*"Incardination is a juridical bond. It has ecclesiastical and spiritual significance in as much as it expresses the ministerial dedication of the deacon to a specific diocesan Church."*

Having already clearly expressed in writing his intention to serve the diocesan Church for life, upon his ordination the deacon is incardinated into the diocesan Church. Should a deacon move to another diocese, he will remain incardinated until the norms of Canon Law regarding ex-cardination are fulfilled.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 78)*

### Ministry of the Word

*The mere fact of ordination does not entitle a deacon to enjoy and exercise those faculties generally granted deacons. The deacon's right to faculties is a contingent right dependent upon the decision of the bishop, or his delegate.*

### Ministry of Preaching

The deacon participates as an evangelizer and teacher in the Church's mission of heralding the Word. In the Liturgy of the Word, especially in the Eucharist or in those liturgies where he is the presiding minister, the deacon proclaims the Gospel.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 31)*

Chief among the faculties accorded to permanent deacons is that of preaching the Word of God. Canon 764 states that "deacons possess the faculty to preach everywhere," unless (1) this faculty has been restricted or removed by the competent ordinary, or (2) unless express permission is required by particular law. This faculty is given by the

general law by virtue of their ordination and not because of appointment to a particular office.

The ministry of preaching entrusted to the clergy is much wider than giving the homily and could include catechetical instructions, giving retreats, parish renewal programs, bible study groups, etc.

A deacon must obtain the permission of the local pastor, chaplain, etc., when preaching outside the parish of assignment.

### Ministry of Liturgy

*“In the context of the Church’s public worship, because of its centrality in the life of the believing community, the ministry of the deacon in the threefold diakonia of the word, of the liturgy and of charity is uniquely concentrated and integrated.”*

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 34)*

- ❖ During the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy, the deacon participates in specific penitential rites as designated in the Roman Missal.
- ❖ He properly proclaims the Gospel.
- ❖ He may preach the homily in accord with the provisions of Canon Law.
- ❖ He voices the needs of the people in the General Intercessions, needs with which he should have a particular and personal familiarity from the circumstances of his ministry of charity.
- ❖ The deacon assists the presider and other ministers in accepting the offerings of the people - symbolic of his traditional role in receiving and distributing the resources of the community among those in need - and he helps prepare the gifts for sacrifice.
- ❖ During the celebration he helps the faithful participate more fully, consciously and actively in the Eucharistic sacrifice, may extend the invitation of peace and serves as an Ordinary Minister of Communion.
- ❖ Deacons have a special responsibility for the distribution of the cup.
- ❖ Finally, he dismisses the community at the end of the Eucharistic liturgy.
- ❖ Other liturgical roles for which the deacon is authorized include those of:

Solemnly baptizing (*cf. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and Rite of Baptism for Children*)

Witnessing marriages (*cf. Rite of Marriage*)

Bringing Viaticum to the dying (*cf. Pastoral Care of the Sick*)

Presiding over funerals and burials (*cf. Order of Christian Funerals*)

**The deacon can preside at the Liturgies of the Word and Communion Services in the absence of a priest.**

❖ He may officiate at the celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours, and at Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament (*cf. Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*).

❖ He can conduct public rites of blessing, offer prayer services for the sick and dying, and administer the Church sacramentals, as designated in the Book of Blessings.  
(*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 35*)

Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest:

Every effort to have the Celebration of Mass on Sunday should be made, but if on rare occasions such is not possible, *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, a rite provided by the Church is the response to the need of the faithful to gather for Sunday worship. Assemblies of this kind should not diminish but rather increase the desire of the faithful to take part in the celebration of the Eucharist.  
(*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, nn. 1-13*)

All deacons who are assigned a part in such celebrations by the diocesan bishop should strive to keep alive in the community a genuine hunger for the Eucharist, so that no opportunity for the celebration of Mass will ever be missed.  
(*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, n. 13*)

As a minister of the Word, who also has a responsibility for the sacraments, the deacon is called in a special way to lead these Sunday assemblies. Since the deacon has been ordained for the nurture and increase of the People of God, it belongs to him to lead the prayers, to proclaim the Gospel, to preach the homily and to give Holy Communion. When a deacon is available, he leads the celebration.  
(*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, n. 23*)

When a deacon presides at a Sunday celebration in the absence of a priest, he acts in the usual manner in regard to the greetings, the prayers, the Gospel reading and homily, the giving of Holy Communion and the dismissal and blessing.... **Leaving the priest's chair vacant, he uses a chair other than the priest's as a symbol that the community awaits the presence of the priest.**  
(*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, n. 24*)

The deacon is to be assisted by other ministers who will proclaim the Scriptures other than the Gospel, assist him in the distribution of Holy Communion, if needed, sing the psalms and other songs, provide instrumental music and prepare the place for the celebration.  
(*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, n. 25*)

### The Minister of the Anointing of the Sick:

On February 11, 2005, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith published a note "On the Minister of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick" (Prot no. 41/74) which stated: "The Code of Canon Law in canon 1003 § 1 repeats exactly the doctrine expressed by the Council of Trent (Sessio XIV, canon 4: DS 1719); cf. also the Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 1516), that only priests (Bishops and presbyters) are ministers of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.... Neither deacons nor laypersons can exercise this ministry and any such action would constitute simulation of the Sacrament."

### **Ministry of Charity and Justice**

As an ordained participant in the Church's ministry of charity and justice, the deacon assumes the duties entrusted to him by his bishop with humility and enthusiasm. At the core of his spirituality a deacon puts on Christ and is guided by the love of Christ in caring for all in his charge: "Charity is the very soul of ecclesial communion [DMLPD, n. 55]."

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 84)*

The deacon must strive, therefore, to serve all of humanity "without discrimination, while devoting particular care to the suffering and the sinful [DMLPD, n. 38]."

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 85)*

### **III. OFFICE OF THE DIACONATE**

#### **PREAMBLE**

*The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States (USCCB 2005) is the basis for this handbook. It is presented to the deacon community of the Diocese of Springfield as a tangible expression of the Bishops' gratitude to them for their dedicated ministry to God's people. It is also intended to challenge and encourage them to be, with greater dedication and clarity, the Sacrament of Jesus - the Servant Christ to a servant Church.*

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The deacons assist the Bishop in his pastoral service to the people of God in the Diocese of Springfield. The Deacon Assembly will promote fraternal cooperation among deacons and with the diocesan priesthood and the laity, recognizing the gifts of each and the complementary nature of their vocations.*

#### **FORMATION BOARD**

The membership of the Formation Board shall consist of: the Director of Formation, Vocation Coordinator, Academic Formation Coordinator, Pastoral Coordinator, Formation Liaison, the Director of Deacons and any other person appointed by the Bishop. The Formation Board reports directly to the Bishop and is responsible for the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation of deacon aspirants and candidates.

#### **MEETING OF THE FORMATION BOARD**

Meetings will be held eight times a year: four at the Maguire Pastoral Center in Springfield and four at Elms College in Chicopee. The meetings at Elms College will be from 5-7 p.m. so the men in formation can meet with the Board.

#### **MEMBERSHIP OF THE DEACON ASSEMBLY**

The Bishop, Canonical Advisor, the Director of Deacons and all the permanent deacons of the diocese constitute the membership of the Deacon Assembly. The Bishop, or in his absence the Director of Deacons, is the presiding officer.

#### **MEETINGS OF THE DEACON ASSEMBLY**

*"With the permission of the bishop and in his presence or that of his delegate, it would be opportune for deacons periodically to meet to discuss their ministry, exchange experiences, advance formation and encourage each other in fidelity. Such encounters might also be of interest to candidates to the Permanent Diaconate (Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons (USCCB 1998) no. 6."*



Meetings will be held from time to time, but at least annually, depending at the discretion of the Bishop and the desires of the members.

## **DEACON COUNCIL**

The Deacon Council serves as the post-ordination board. Its membership consists of the Bishop, a canonical advisor appointed by the Bishop, the Director of Deacons who will chair the Council in the absence of the Bishop, Deacons from the four vicariates [or other geographic designations] elected from the membership of the Assembly, deacon coordinators of the standing committees who will be appointed by the Bishop and wife members [2]. Elected members serve a term of three years.

## **MEETINGS OF THE DEACON COUNCIL**

Deacon Council Meetings will be held at different parishes throughout the Diocese during the year. Meetings are generally scheduled from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturdays.

## **DEACON COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES**

### *Committee on Vocations*

This committee collaborates with the Diocesan Vocation Director for the coordination of deacons in the promotion and recruitment of vocations to the ordained ministry and assists those discerning a call to be a permanent deacon in the Church.

#### Core Responsibilities:

Promote catechesis on the permanent diaconate among the laity, priests and religious throughout the diocese.

Establish objective criteria, a deacon profile, for the discernment of vocations to the permanent diaconate.

### *Committee on Ongoing Intellectual and Spiritual Formation*

This committee supports the deacons in their ongoing spiritual and intellectual formation and assists them in the assessment of their spiritual and intellectual needs.

#### Core Responsibilities:

In conjunction with the Director of Ministry to priests, promote awareness of the need for ongoing spiritual and intellectual formation among the deacons and priests of the diocese.

Sponsor intensive sessions in spirituality, study days and theological renewal courses, workshops on pastoral methodology and leadership. Assist deacons in the development of an *Ongoing Continuing Formation Plan*. Monitors the 3-year program for deacons ordained after 2006.

*Committee on Deacon Life and Ministry*

This committee supports the deacons in their diaconal life and assigned ministry and assists them in the assessment of their personal, family and ministerial needs after ordination.

Core Responsibilities:

Establish support groups for deacons in each of the deaneries/vicariates of the diocese.

Provide guidance and resources to deacons in particular difficulties and circumstances.

## **IV. Particular Law Governing Deacons in the United States**

### **Clerical Title**

While various forms of address have emerged with regard to deacons, the Congregation for the Clergy has determined that in all forms of address for permanent deacons, the appropriate title is "Deacon." (*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, n. 88)

### **Clerical Attire**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops specifies that permanent deacons should resemble the lay faithful in dress and matters of lifestyle. (*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, n. 89)

The policy of the Diocese of Springfield is that the Roman collar should not be worn, but rather that the Diaconate Cross should be the sign for the Permanent Deacon. All newly ordained deacons will receive a Diaconate Cross. In addition, the policy of the Diocese of Springfield also states that an alb and stole is the proper attire for Mass, Communion Services and all other Church Services (e.g. Novenas, Processions, Master of Ceremonies, etc.).

### **Liturgy of the Hours**

Permanent deacons are required to include as part of their daily prayer those parts of the Liturgy of the Hours known as Morning and Evening Prayer.... Whenever possible, they should lead these prayers with the community to whom they have been assigned to minister. (*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, n. 90)

### **Participation in Political Office**

A permanent deacon may not present his name for election to any public office or in any other general election, or accept a nomination or an appointment to public office, without the prior written permission of the diocesan bishop. A permanent deacon may not actively and publicly participate in a political campaign without the prior written permission of the diocesan bishop.

(*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, n. 91)

### **Temporary Absence from an Assignment**

Permanent deacons may temporarily absent themselves from their place of assignment after consultation with the Director of Deacons and with the permission of their proper pastor or priest-supervisor.

(*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, n. 92)

## **Decree of Appointment**

A deacon shall receive a decree of appointment from his bishop, which should delineate his specific duties and responsibilities and the designation of his proper pastor or priest supervisor [DMLPD, nn. 40-41].

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 93)*

## **Support of the Clergy**

Permanent deacons are to take care of their own and their family's needs using income derived from their full-time employment by the diocese, parish, or secular profession.

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 94)*

## **Social Security Insurance**

To provide for their own upkeep, every permanent deacon is obliged to satisfy the legal requirements for Social Security benefits or a comparable program [DMLPD, n. 15, cf. CIC, cc. 281, 1274].

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 95)*

## **Remuneration**

Permanent deacons in full-time employment by the diocese, parish, or agency are to receive remuneration commensurate with the salaries and benefits provided to the laymen and laywomen on staff for that particular occupation [DMLPD, n. 16].

Permanent deacons in full-time secular employment, as well as those in part-time ministries, are to be reimbursed for legitimate expenses incurred in their ministry

*(National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 96)*

## **Continuing Formation and Spiritual Retreat**

### Ongoing Spiritual Formation

Deacons are required to attend at least one weekend retreat each year. Customarily, in the Diocese of Springfield, these retreats are scheduled in a three-year cycle with a Deacons-only Retreat, a Deacon and Wife Retreat and a retreat of the deacon's choice.

### Ongoing Intellectual Formation

Deacons are expected to complete twelve hours of continuing education annually. This may include diocesan sponsored Clergy Days, workshops, seminars and other presentations. Deacons may also choose to do an Independent Study Program, attend a current diaconal formation course, or participate in an on-line course. Reimbursement for these programs will be determined by the Deacon Council.

## **Loss of Diaconal Status**

A deacon can be returned to the lay state by canonical dismissal or because of a dispensation granted by the Holy See. Once dismissed or dispensed, he no longer enjoys any rights or privileges accorded clerics by the law of the Church [DMLPD, n. 21, Cf. CIC, cc. 290-293]. (*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 99*)

## **Withdrawal of Diaconal Faculties**

If the ministry of a permanent deacon becomes ineffective or even harmful due to some personal difficulties or irresponsible behavior, his ministerial assignment and faculties will be withdrawn by the diocesan bishop in accord with Canon Law. (*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 100*)

## **Diocesan Liability**

The same policies that govern liability for priests in the diocese are applicable to permanent deacons.

## **Service of a Deacon from another Diocesan Church**

Since a permanent deacon is an ordained cleric, the bishop may not ordinarily forbid a visiting permanent deacon the exercise of his order provided that the deacon is not under censure. (*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, n. 102*)

## **Service of a Deacon Outside the Diocese:**

There may be occasions when a permanent deacon is outside the Diocese of Springfield on vacation or as the result of an invitation to officiate a Marriage or to preside at a Baptism, Funeral, or other approved liturgical service. In such a case, the deacon should contact the Diocesan Office of Permanent Deacons or the Office of the Chancellor as early as possible to obtain the necessary letter of recommendation. The deacon should provide to the office the name and address of the person to whom the letter should be addressed, the purpose of his request and the duration of his stay.

## **Resignation/ Retirement of Deacons**

It is the policy of the diocese that a deacon must submit a written letter of resignation to the bishop at age 75. The bishop may accept or defer the resignation. Upon retirement, the deacon retains diaconal faculties within the diocese unless it is clear that he cannot function properly within these faculties.

A deacon may request retirement from diaconal ministry when he becomes unable to fulfill his office due to ill health or another serious reason. The deacon will have discussed this with his wife and family, Director of Deacons, his pastor or supervisor. The deacon must submit his request for retirement to the Director of the Diaconate Program.

In consultation with the Diocesan Clergy Commission, the bishop will make his decision and an official letter of acceptance will be sent to all concerned parties.

## V. APPENDIX

## Code of Conduct For Clergy, Religious Brothers, Sisters, Staff and Volunteers

All clergy, religious brothers, sisters, staff and volunteers are required to sign a "Code of Conduct" (see Appendix).

Every three years, all deacons of the diocese are required to complete the CORI process and attend a Safe Environment Workshop sponsored by the Office of Counseling, Prevention and Victim Services.

The Diocese of Springfield is committed to keeping children and youth safe. To that end, the Diocese has adopted a number of policies and procedures. These policies are spelled out in the *Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*. All deacons of the Diocese are required to become familiar with these established policies and procedures.

Clergy, religious brothers, sisters, staff and volunteers have a duty to report their own ethical or professional misconduct and the misconduct of others.

"When there is an indication of illegal actions by clergy, religious brothers, sisters, staff, or volunteers, the proper civil authorities (law enforcement and/or the Department of Social Services) and the Diocese of Springfield must be notified immediately."  
(*cf. Code of Conduct for Clergy, Religious Brothers, Sisters, Staff and Volunteers, Section 4.1*)



**CODE OF CONDUCT  
FOR  
CLERGY, STAFF,  
RELIGIOUS BROTHERS/SISTERS,  
AND VOLUNTEERS**

**DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD**

**CURRENT 2012-2013**

**Diocese of Springfield**  
**Code of Conduct**  
**For Clergy, Religious Brothers/Sisters, Staff and Volunteers**

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## Introduction

The Diocese of Springfield is committed to keeping children and youth safe. To that end, we have adopted a number of policies and procedures. These policies are spelled out in the ***Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth***.

Appropriate affection between Church personnel and minors constitutes a positive part of Church life and ministry. Nonetheless, any touching can be misunderstood and must be considered with great discretion. Unfortunately, some forms of physical affection have been used by adults to initiate inappropriate contact with minors.

This Code of Conduct was developed so that we can maintain the safest possible environment for our minors. The last page contains the form that all clergy, religious brothers and sisters, staff, and volunteers are required to sign.

## Guidelines

### **1. Conduct with Children and Youth**

*Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers working with children and youth shall maintain an open and trustworthy relationship between child/youth and adult.*

- 1.1 Physical contact with children/youth can be misconstrued and should occur only when completely non-sexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private.
- 1.2 Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers must refrain from the illegal possession and/or use of drugs and/or alcohol when with children/youth.
- 1.3 Clergy and religious brothers/sisters must not allow individual non-related children/young people to stay overnight in their private accommodations or residence.
- 1.4 Staff and volunteers must not provide shared, private, overnight accommodations for **individual** young people including, but not limited to, accommodations in any Church-owned facility, private residence, hotel room, or any other place **where there is no other adult supervision present**.
- 1.5 Communication with minors (e.g. notes, letters, e-mail, Internet exchanges, telephone calls) must be for professional/ministry-related reasons only.

### **2. Sexual Conduct**

*Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers must not, for sexual gain or intimacy, exploit the trust placed in them by the faith community.*

- 2.1 Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers are called to be an example of chastity in all relationships at all times.

- 2.2 Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers who provide pastoral counseling or spiritual direction services must avoid developing inappropriately intimate relationships with minors, other staff, or parishioners.
- 2.3 No clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, or volunteer will exploit another person for sexual purposes.
- 2.4 Allegations of sexual misconduct will be taken seriously. Procedures outlined in the Diocese of Springfield's *Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth* will be followed to protect the rights of all involved.
- 2.5 Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers should review and know the contents of the child abuse regulations and reporting requirements for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and will follow those mandates.

### **3. Harassment**

*Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers must not engage in physical, psychological, written or verbal harassment of staff, volunteers, or parishioners and must not tolerate such harassment by other Church staff or volunteers.*

- 3.1 Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers shall provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written or verbal intimidation or harassment.
- 3.2 Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical, written, or verbal behavior, including without limitation the following: physical or mental abuse, racial or ethnic slurs, unwelcome sexual advances or touching, sexual comments or jokes, requests for sexual favors used as a condition of employment or to affect personnel decisions such as promotion or compensation, or display of offensive materials.
- 3.3 Harassment can be a single incident or a persistent pattern of behavior where the purpose of the effect is to create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating work environment.

### **4. Reporting Ethical or Professional Misconduct**

*Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers have a duty to report their own ethical or professional misconduct and the misconduct of others.*

- 4.1 Clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, and volunteers must hold each other accountable for maintaining the highest ethical and professional standards. When there is an indication of illegal actions by clergy, religious brothers/sisters, staff, or volunteers, the proper civil authorities (law enforcement and/or the Department of Social Services) and the Diocese of Springfield must be notified immediately.

## Code of Conduct

As a cleric, religious brother/sister, staff or volunteer of the Diocese of Springfield, I promise to follow the rules and guidelines in the Code of Conduct **when I am ministering to the children and youth of the Diocese:**

### I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at Church activities.
- Avoid smoking and/or using tobacco products in the presence of children/youth.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Refuse to accept from -- and refrain from giving -- gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator.
- Report suspected child abuse to the Department of Social Services. I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is a misdemeanor according to the law. Consultation with the pastor, administrator, or supervisor is recommended but not required.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

### I will not:

- Touch any child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Provide tobacco or alcohol to minors.
- Use, possess, provide, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol when ministering to children/youth.
- Use, possess or allow access to a firearm when in the presence of children/youth.
- Strike, spank, shake or slap children and/or youth.
- Use any discipline that verbally abuses and/or humiliates children and/or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

I understand that as a cleric, staff, or volunteer of the Diocese of Springfield, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Position

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parish

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/Town

## DEACON ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

1. All changes in diaconal ministry assignments will be processed in consultation with the bishop, the pastor of the parish or the supervisor of the deacon's current assignment, the pastor of the parish or the supervisor of institution of the deacon's proposed assignment, the Director of Deacons, deacon and spouse (all concerned parties). The initiative for transfer can also come from the bishop, the pastor or supervisor of the deacon's current assignment or the potential pastor or supervisor.
2. A deacon may request reassignment at any time in his term. Prior to such time, the deacon will have discussed this request with his current pastor or supervisor. The Director of Deacons will advise the deacon of any assignments that are available. The deacon may also take the initiative to explore a possible assignment.
3. Once a new potential assignment is identified, the deacon must make his request in writing to the Director of Deacons. Similarly, the pastor of the new parish or the supervisor of the institution of the proposed assignment must submit his request to the bishop with a copy sent to the Director of Deacons. Both requests are to include a copy of the detailed description of the areas in which the deacon will be expected to minister in his new assignment as described below.
4. Prior to the assignment, an *Agreement for the Services of a Deacon in the Diocese of Springfield* is to be completed by the Pastor/Supervisor and the Deacon.
5. Upon receiving both letters and the *Agreement for the Services of a Deacon in the Diocese of Springfield*, the Director of Deacons will make a recommendation to the bishop.

## DIACONAL DUTIES WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE MASS

### Procession:

The deacon walks beside the priest (on the right) unless he is carrying the Book of the Gospels (#171 GIRM). Both the priest and the deacon reverence the altar with the other ministers and both the priest and the deacon kiss the altar and go to the chair(s) (#173 GIRM).

### Penitential Rite:

The priest introduces the Penitential Rite and after the period of silence, if the Kyrie is used, the deacon gives the invocation and the priest gives the absolution.

### Gospel:

After the First Reading, the Responsorial Psalm, and the Second Reading, and during the Alleluia, the deacon stands before the priest, bows and says quietly, *"Your blessing, Father."* The priest gives the blessing, *"May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips..."* the deacon answers, *"AMEN"*. The deacon, carrying the Book of Gospels, goes to the lectern and says, *"The Lord be with you."* After the response he then says, *"A Reading from the holy Gospel according to N."* He makes the sign of the cross on the book, and then on his forehead, lips and breast. At the end of the Gospel, the deacon adds, *"The Gospel of the Lord."* While holding the Book of the Gospels slightly aloft, the deacon venerates the book with a kiss and says privately *"Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away."* If the deacon is not giving the homily he returns to his chair, bowing slightly to the priest before sitting down. **Whenever our Bishop is in the Sanctuary, whether as the celebrant or is presiding, please bring the Book of the Gospels to Bishop for him to reverence it.**

### General Intercessions:

The priest gives the introduction, the deacon announces the intentions and the priest gives the concluding prayer (#177 GIRM).

### Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts:

The deacon prepares the Altar (assisted by the servers) while the priest remains at the chair. The deacon assists the priest in receiving the people's gifts. The deacon hands the priest the paten with the bread to be consecrated, pours the wine and a little water into the chalice saying inaudibly: *"By the mystery of this water and wine..."* then passes the chalice to the priest (#178 GIRM).

The deacon stands slightly behind (to the right) of the priest during the Eucharistic prayer. From the Epiclesis until the elevation of the chalice the deacon should be kneeling.\* At the final doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer, the deacon stands next to the

priest, holding up the chalice as the priest raises the paten with the Eucharistic bread, until the people have responded with the "*Amen.*" (#179-180 GIRM).

\*If for some reason the deacon is unable to kneel, he remains standing slightly behind the priest.

### **Sign of Peace:**

The priest says the prayer for peace and the greeting "*The peace of the Lord be with you*" and the people respond with "*And with your spirit.*" The deacon invites all to exchange a sign of peace. With hands joined, facing the people he says, "*Let us offer each other the sign of peace*" (#181 GIRM).

### **Communion:**

After the priest's communion, the deacon receives under both kinds from the priest himself. The deacon administers the chalice to the other ministers. The deacon consumes all of the remaining Precious Blood of Christ at the altar (#182 GIRM).

Purification of sacred vessels is not something that the deacon does at the altar, but at the credence table, perhaps to avoid the appearance of the deacon doing a ministry alone at the altar that is other than preparatory or in assistance to the priest.

When the distribution of Communion is over, the deacon returns to the altar with the priest, collects the fragments, should any remain and then carries the chalice and other sacred vessels to the credence table, where he purifies them and arranges them as usual, while the priest returns to the chair. Nevertheless, it is also permitted to leave vessels needing to be purified on a corporal, suitably covered, on the credence table and to purify them immediately after Mass, following the Dismissal of the people.

### **Concluding Rite:**

If the solemn blessing is used, after the priest has said "*The Lord be with you*" and the people have responded "*And with your spirit*" the deacon says, "*Bow down for the blessing.*" (#185 GIRM).

After the priest's blessing, the deacon, with hands joined and facing the people, dismisses them saying, "*Go forth, the mass is ended.*" (or other similar words) (#185 GIRM).

Along with the priest, the deacon venerates the altar with a kiss, makes a profound bow, and leaves in the manner followed for the entrance procession (#186 GIRM).



**Note to Deacons:**

1. As has been previously mentioned, each priest may have other preferences. If this is the case, please follow the priest's request.
2. **A question was raised concerning two deacons serving Mass, a Deacon of the Word and a Deacon of the Altar. The specific duties of each should be determined prior to Mass, in consultation with the Priest.**
3. When visiting another church for a funeral, wedding, or mass, please call the church and let the pastor know that you would like to serve.

## DIACONAL SERVICE AGREEMENT

We the undersigned freely join together in this formal agreement of diaconal service. We hereby formally agree that

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ordained a Permanent Deacon of the Roman Catholic Church,  
will exercise his diaconal ministry at

---

with the guidance of its pastor/director

Our agreement on the diaconal service to be performed is as follows:

1. **The deacon's responsibility to the parish (as a guide, please recall that the ministry of charity should predominate).**
  - a. **Ministry of Charity:** (approximate number of hours/month)
    - 1.
    - 2.
    - 3.
  - b. **Ministry of the Word:** (approximate number of hours/month)
    - 1.
    - 2.
    - 3.
  - c. **Ministry of Liturgy:** (approximate number of hours/month)
    - 1.
    - 2.
    - 3.

It is understood that the deacon's ministry responsibilities are not to interfere with his obligations to his spouse and family and occupation.

The deacon agrees to take part in continuing education courses; he also agrees to meet regularly with a Spiritual Director. The deacon (and his wife) agrees to be in a support group with other deacons (and wives) that will meet at least four times a year.

## **2. The Parish and its responsibility to the deacon:**

Recognizing that the permanent deacon's service is of a part-time nature with no compensation expected, the following however, should be provided by the parish for his ministry:

- Reimbursement of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year for the deacon's continuing education will be provided by the parish. The expenditure of this amount is for programs approved by the Permanent Diaconate Director. Reimbursement of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year for the deacon's retreat will be provided by the parish. These amounts will be payable to the Permanent Diaconate Office.
- The parish shall also provide compensation for the use of the deacon's car when used for specific pastoral work within the parish. (Mileage is subject to change).
- Space should be provided the deacon for office work and counseling. There should also be provided, when necessary, secretarial assistance, office supplies, and postage.
- The parish should always be encouraged to pray for the deacon.

## **3. The Priest and Deacon: Mutual Responsibility**

A positive relationship is necessary in order that the diaconal ministry be fully realized. This is a relationship of brotherly love fully lived between priest and deacon.

The deacon enters into special fraternal relationship with all ordained priests of the universal church. With them he is united in a fraternity of service and sacramental ministry. This sharing of the one sacrament in witness to the call of the Spirit makes them brothers in service and commitment to the people of God.

The vocation ministry, whether priesthood or diaconate, implies a relationship of mutual trust and acceptance. The ministry of the Church calls for a bond of charity.

## **4. It is understood that the attached Corollaries form a part of this agreement.**

This contract will automatically be subject to review annually and in the event of any change in family or job circumstances that will significantly affect the ability of the deacon to perform the ministry described above. It will automatically be reviewed if the assignment of the deacon's pastoral supervisor changes. The contract may be modified

or terminated under these circumstances, when necessary, or when for serious reasons all parties agree to the need for a modification or termination.

We fraternally acknowledge our acceptance of this contract and pray for a fruitful ministry.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deacon

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor/Director

This contract has been submitted for review and is acceptable.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Deacons

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Diaconate Advisor

## THE MINISTRY OF THE DEACON

### MINISTRY OF CHARITY

To perform charitable service and works of social welfare in the name of the parish family or of the diocesan family  
Hospital visitations and communion  
Nursing home visitations  
To care for the aged or home-bound  
Handicapped ministry  
Jail ministry  
Marriage cases/Family Life programs  
Provide a program on Social Justice concerns  
To provide leadership within the community in Ecumenical programs  
Diocesan Departments  
Administration  
Develop lay ministries in the parish and neighborhood

### MINISTRY OF THE WORD

To proclaim the Holy Gospel at the Liturgy  
To preach the homily (upon request)  
To catechize – instruction classes, pre-baptismal, pre-marriage programs  
To coordinate and/or teach a scripture study program  
To be available as a consultant for various parish groups which are involved in educational programs

### MINISTRY OF LITURGY

To baptize  
To witness marriage  
To preside at wakes and interments  
To preside at formal services of the assembly (scripture service, benediction, Stations of the Cross, para-sacramental reconciliation, Liturgy of Hours, Vespers or Night prayer)  
To serve as Deacon at Mass  
To provide or assist in the formation programs for lectors, special ministers of the Eucharist and acolytes  
To assist the Bishop when he celebrates Sacraments at the parish

When exercising the ministry in any place where extra expenses are incurred, the deacon is to receive reimbursement for such expenses. The payment of this money should come from the parish or institution which requested the service.

The disposition of remuneration for liturgical functions also merits a clear understanding. The policy of the Diocese is that stole fees given on the occasion of weddings, funerals and baptisms belong to the parish where the liturgical event was celebrated. Money given personally and other out-right gifts are, of course, the personal property of the one to whom they are given.

With the understanding that the order of his priorities are family, necessary employment for the support of their needs, and ministerial assignment, the deacon is expected to perform his duties of ministry in accordance with the time commitment specified. He is expected to coordinate his ministerial activities with all others concerned for the proper fulfillment of the needs of the particular area of assignment. Prudence is to be employed to maintain the proper balance of time spent between his responsibilities of family, employment and ministry.

It is recognized that the deacon is expected to exercise accountability both to those whom he bears personal responsibility and also to the church which he is serving as an ordained minister. With regard to his ecclesiastical responsibilities, the deacon is accountable to the bishop of the diocese either directly or through the pastor or the Diocesan Director for the Permanent Diaconate.

It is understood that ministry assignments are the responsibility of the bishop as he perceives the needs of the Church of the Diocese and are therefore, in consultation with the deacon, subject to change when deemed necessary by the bishop in which event the service agreement would become null and void.

## COROLLARIES TO THE AGREEMENT

Under the direct supervision of the Director of Deacons and the general direction of the bishop, the deacon is to serve the Church community in an assigned ministry as specific in the particular service agreement mutually entered into between the deacon and the person directly responsible for the area of ministry in which he will serve. He is to act in the name of the Church as a special servant of the people and is to exemplify the inseparable connection between worship and charity.

Although by virtue of his ordination the deacon is a cleric, his ministry is intimately related to that of the lay person. He is to follow a style of life that resembles that of the laity and is not to be distinguished by attire or title.

The agreement by which the deacon's appointment is designated entitles him to work as a team member with any others charged with the responsibility of ministering to the identified ministry.

As a general rule, each deacon is expected to perform approximately 12 hours per week in his field service involvement. This time span will be apportioned according to the specific needs of his ministry. The deacon is free to spend additional time in his ministry if his other responsibilities permit.

It is important that there be clear understanding of and agreement to the mutual expectations between the deacon and his ministry. While it is recognized that these responsibilities may develop, they will do so in a context of in-depth discussion with others sharing the ministry identified.

Ordinarily, the deacon is expected to serve regularly at the altar on Sunday. Ministerial assistance at Mass is both for support and for identification. He and the priest are to sense the partnership they share in ministry. The people of the community should learn to identify him as a man committed to the diaconal ministry, sharing the office of bishop and priest.

As a rule, the deacon's liturgical ministry will be restricted to his place of ministry and will be determined by the needs of those he is serving. It is understood that in the Diocese of Springfield, any liturgical ministry, over and above that within the context of his assigned ministry, is normally by way of exception and for extraordinary circumstances. Normally these circumstances require the agreement of the pastor.

**\*Unless specified otherwise in the service agreement, the deacon is to serve in his ministry without pay.**

A clear understanding should be worked out from the beginning about how any materials and supplies should be furnished. This agreement need not take any specific form and need not be in writing. Nevertheless, it is important that no situation arise where expenditures could be the source of disagreement.

## Retiring from Active Service in the Diaconate

**Upon reaching the age of 75, an active deacon must submit a letter of resignation to the Bishop even if he is not ready to retire.** If the deacon would like to continue active service, then he may indicate so in his letter. The Bishop will confer with the Director of Deacons and the Deacon Council before he makes his recommendation. Please follow the listed directions below to submit a letter of resignation properly.

- Write a letter to the Bishop indicating whether you would or would not like to retire and the reasons that you feel that way. A sample letter is located on page 13;
- Send your completed letter to the attention of the Director of Deacons at the Office of the Diaconate.
- The Director of Deacons will review your letter and discuss it with the Deacon Council and then present it to the Bishop with further documentation from the Director of Deacons and the Deacon Council.
- The Bishop will review all the documentation and make his decision. A letter will be sent directly to the deacon indicating the Bishop's decision.

A letter of resignation can be sent at any time an active deacon is ready for retirement from the Diaconate. Please follow the same instructions as above to submit your final letter of resignation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the office at 413.452.0674.



## Sample letter of Resignation

Dear Bishop,

Having reached the age of 75 on \_\_\_\_\_, and in accordance with diocesan policy, I hereby submit my resignation from diaconal ministry.

Faithfully Yours in Christ,

\*This is a simple generic form for a letter of resignation. Please feel free to add any other information that you would like to send to the Bishop.

### Continuing Formation for Newly Ordained (3 year program)

Upon ordination, all new deacons are required by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) as outlined in the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* to have an additional three years of Continuing Formation. The Deacon Council in the Diocese of Springfield decided on and voted that the three years should be spent in formation with their class.

The Class of 2007 was the first to start this program. After discussion, additions and deletions from their experience, the Class of 2009 was able to enhance the program. They meet once a month from September thru June at a designated parish. The deacon of that parish hosts the meeting for that month. They celebrate Mass, share in brunch and then meet to discuss any issues that they might be experiencing in the past month. On occasion, they also bring in relevant guest speakers.

The Class of 2011 is following in their footsteps. The Deacon Council feels that these monthly meetings are invaluable to the new deacons and will help them along the way in their ministries. As long as each class continues to uphold this form of Continuing Formation, the Deacon Council will not change the process. However, if the meetings are not strictly upheld the Council will have no choice but to institute a Continuing Formation Program at Elms College in the standard educational format as the Diaconate Formation Program.

## DEACON PREFERENCES FOR WAKES AND FUNERALS

My Brothers,

Dealing with a loss of a loved one is never easy, but there are steps that can be taken to lighten the burden on the ones you leave behind. Attached you will find an updated Deacon Wake and Funeral Preferences Form. This form provides you with an opportunity to convey your final wishes as to your wake and funeral.

A copy is kept on file in the Diaconate Office and when the time comes, a coordinator from your deanery will contact your family and assist them in making all your requested arrangements.

Please fill out the attached form and return it to the Diaconate Office at your earliest possible convenience. This form is not mandatory; however we do recommend that you take this opportunity to make your wishes known.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leo", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Deacon Leo Coughlin  
Director of Deacons

**DEACON PREFERENCES FOR WAKES AND FUNERALS**

I am Deacon \_\_\_\_\_ (please print) and I have listed below my wishes for my Wake and Funeral Services.

Location where wake is to take place\*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*Please specify whether the wake will take place in a Funeral Home or a Church

Deacon/Priest to conduct wake service: \_\_\_\_\_

Deacons of the Mass: (Altar) \_\_\_\_\_

(Word) \_\_\_\_\_

(Other) \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite Old Testament Readings: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Favorite New Testament Readings: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Favorite Gospel: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like the following musical selections: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Clothing I prefer:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Pall Bearers (if you prefer to have deacons):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Celebrant (besides Bishops-please print):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Homilist: (please print)** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Designated contact person:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

## Sunshine Club

The Sunshine Club was established many years ago to assist our brother deacons in need. Deacon Pat Baldasaro is our administrator and he sends out a bill once a year for annual dues. At this time the dues is set for \$10.00 a year. If you or a deacon you know could use some assistance, please call Deacon Pat Baldasaro at 413-684-1120 with the information.